

WELCOME TO ORPHEUS, HOPE YOU DON'T SURVIVE

An Introduction to White Wolf's Newest Game

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Fear the dead, for someone opened a door into their world.

Fear the living, for it was they who opened that door.

Fear for everyone, because the door never closed.

White Wolf Game Studios offers its newest and most original entry into its perennial World of Darkness universe, entitled **Orpheus**. From concept to implementation, this series offers unique approaches to game design and storytelling while placing greater emphasis on the players and their characters' impact upon the universe.

Dark and Stormy Nights
Orpheus is a retelling of ghost stories and hauntings, but from the human side of the equation. The characters are unique; they are a select few capable of projecting their souls into the hereafter and interacting with the dead. In fact, **Orpheus** is the first World of Darkness line to allow for the creation of two supernatural archetypes

within the same book: projectors, with the capacity to leave their bodies behind, and ghosts, supernatural entities that can manifest to, and interact with, the living.

More importantly, **Orpheus** is unique because it is a limited-run line encompassing six books (plus a fiction anthology). The series has a beginning, middle and end, with each supplement pushing forward the events of a metaplot where the characters take center stage. More so, because **Orpheus** is a limited series, both the overall and individual concepts were designed simultaneously, giving every book a distinctive pace and unified feel. Using a new approach that dispenses with the splat- and city-book format, each release includes all the necessary information to change the dynamics of the chronicle, the relevant supporting characters involved in the new chapters, potential new rules and character-relevant information, as well as adventures to propel

each new event home. Each supplement is designed to appeal to a wide cross section of fans. That said, the **Orpheus** corebook is all-inclusive, allowing Storytellers to run full chronicles with only one book.

Orpheus tells the story of the Orpheus Group, a company that pioneered the technology to explore the hereafter, creating agents called projectors. Orpheus Group is now one of several companies in a growing market that contacts the dead on behalf of the living. Many missions are altruistic, be they finding a dead husband to uncover his killer or laying a haunted mansion to rest by helping the ghosts continue on to the afterlife. In these roles, the characters are facilitators or acting as proxies for ghosts when the restless spirits cannot act themselves. Beneath the surface, however, are deadlier and less selfless missions. Only a select few agents participate in black bag operations involving blackmail, haunting the living and even assassination. Between rival companies trying to steal seven-figure contracts, hostile ghosts, dangerous contracts and an alien set of creatures called Spectres, the characters have

their hands full with **Orpheus** alone. Each subsequent sourcebook only ups the ante in this high-stakes game of life, death and the hereafter.

Ghost in the Game Mechanics

So what can fans look forward to? Five groups of characters called Shades, which encompass spectral archetypes like Banshees and Poltergeists; four aspect choices, two of which pertain to projectors and two to ghosts; twenty character roles, offering a framework for character generation, and fifty Natures, which are now more crucial than ever for gameplay and mechanics.

Unique to **Orpheus** is the system of powers, called Horrors. Each type of ghost and projector has

two powers that no longer rely on level-based mechanics. The character dictates the Horror's effect by how much Vitality (spiritual energy) he channels into the outcome. Thus a Horror like Wail, for example, can soothe savage tempers at low Vitality and shatter rock at higher expenditure. **Orpheus** also encourages character cooperation throughout the series, starting by rewarding teamwork through Benefits, a side aspect of Horrors. Benefits allow characters to bolster each others' powers, increasing their damage, range or area of effect, facilitating their manipulation or lowering their overall cost. Benefits ensure no combat (and no character's role within that combat) ever grows stagnant or looks the same twice. Benefits

give the characters substantial control over their environment and capabilities.

Finally, although a part of the World of Darkness, **Orpheus** is unique in that it doesn't touch upon other supernatural denizens. In fact, it is designed for both White Wolf's loyal fan base as well as players new to the World of Darkness experience. Gone are the complex lines of interaction between the various species. Instead, **Orpheus** is a self-contained bubble within the World of Darkness, devoid of its often overwhelming cosmology. **Orpheus** serves as the perfect entry-level game to understanding the World of Darkness.

Orpheus... six books... a world of gameplay against an epic event.

